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It is impossible to give any conception of the vast amount of research in this valuable essay in a short review, and, therefore, our readers are referred to the paper itself.

In the same number of the *Revue* will be found a report upon the Ethnographic chart of France, by Dr. Gustav Lagneau, and a criticism of several works upon circumcision as practiced in various parts of the world, by M. Zaborowski.

GEOLOGY AND PALÆONTOLOGY.

GEOLOGICAL NOTES.—At the Saratoga meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science Prof. J. P. Lesley, State Geologist of Pennsylvania, read a very long paper on the progress of the Second Geological Survey of Pennsylvania. The very valuable results accomplished by this survey, both for scientific and economic purposes, were fully set forth, and the importance of completing it was dwelt upon.

Prof. R. P. Whitfield gave notice of the occurrence of rocks in Central Ohio, representing the Marcellus shales of New York. A brief dissertation on the geology of Port Henry, New York, was presented by Prof. T. Sterry Hunt, of Montreal.

Prof. John W. Chickering, Jr., gave a description of the newly discovered cave at Luray, Page county, Va., which he said surpassed the Mammoth cave in beauty and in the size of some of its chambers, and was inferior only in total extent.

Miss Emily A. Smith, of Peoria, Ill., read a paper on the great Oberstein industry, showing the methods of cutting, coloring and polishing agates and secondary gems. She illustrated her remarks by a very fine collection of specimens, which were greatly admired. In the little German village of Oberstein and its vicinity are the 189 mills which cut and polish the countless agates before they are scattered to the four corners of the earth. She visited the locality last season. Through this region is a ledge of trap rock or metaphyx, which was formerly quarried for agates. These quarries are now deserted, and all the agates worked are imported yearly, principally from Brazil, and sold at public auction, the owners of the wheels buying each the amount he can work up during the year. Many of these mills date back to the middle ages. After the secret of coloring was discovered from the Romans, it was found that the Brazilian agates were much more porous, and consequently more readily received the coloring matter. The coloring is principally done at the houses of the workmen.

Prof. F. W. Clarke displayed a specimen of graphite from the Ducktown copper mine, and read a brief paper on it. J. W. Osborn, of Washington, read notes on a peculiar case of corrosion of tin; and Prof. C. H. Hitchcock gave an account of the Blue Hill, Maine, copper veins.——Bernhard Cotta, the geological writer, whose death was announced in September, was born in Thuringia, October 24, 1808, and became at an early age a student of natural sciences, giving especial attention to mineralogy. From 1827 to 1831 he studied at the Academy of Mining in Freiburg, where he was appointed professor in 1842. "The Dendroliths," his first work, was published in 1832. From 1832 to 1832 he was engaged with Naumann in the preparation of the "Geognostic Chart of the Kingdom of Saxony." His later works have been of much value, among them being an "Introduction to the Study of Geognosy and Geology."

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.[1]

ASIA.—Col. Prejevalsky, after being detained at Zaisan on the Chinese frontier by deep snows, left there on the 21st of March last, and passing over a barren desert and along the river Urungu had reached, when last heard from, the river Buguluk in the Southern Altai mountains. The climate is characterized by frost at night and heat and storm during the day.

The expedition of the Count Széchényi had, according to recent dispatches, reached Suchau, on the frontier of Kansu, without impediment, coming by way of Si-ngan the capital of Shen-si and Lan-chow, in Kansu, over passes 9000 feet high, where the temperature fell to thirteen degrees below zero (Fahr.). Here, however, they were refused a safe conduct to the lake Lob-Nor, the Viceroy declaring his inability to protect the expedition. Count Széchényi had, therefore, to abandon his proposed journey across the Kum-Tag to the Lob-Nor. He hoped, however, to start shortly for Lhassa by way of the Koko-Nor.

M. Woéikof has sent to the French Geographical Society a memoir on the Oxus question. After having studied the problem on the spot, the Russian geographer feels certain that the suppression of the Caspian mouth was produced not by a gradual elevation of the country, but by an accumulation of deposits in the bed of the river and the immense drainage produced by the development of irrigation in the Khivan oasis. He feels certain that the restoration of the former state of things would be a very easy work. The restoration of the Caspian, he believes, would reduce the area of the Aral to one-third of its present extent, nor would the change be altogether detrimental to the prosperity of the surrounding countries. When the countries situated between the Caspian and Aral basins shall have become civilized and have utilized for agricultural purposes the waters of all the rivers which feed the interior seas, the Aral will exist no longer, and the Caspian will be reduced to two lakes of nearly elliptical form. The Volga will be joined to the Oxus by a straight canal passing by the eastern side of the Caspian, and its vessels will reach, without transhipment, the northern part of Afghanistan.

In the discussion that followed the reading of this paper, M.

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[1] Edited by ELLIS H. YARNALL; Philadelphia.